



Great Wealth-Unlimited Love-Supreme Happiness-These Are The Rewards Of Good Luck! So Here Is Your Chance To Own

### The World's First and Luckiest Golden Horseshoe

If you want the true secret of great good luck I would like to send you something that comes in a plain brown wrapper.

No - not dirty pictures or anything like that!

But it is something that you won't want your friends, family or neighbors to know you have.

Not for a while, anyway.

Here's why:

I'm going to send you the true secret of good luck - guaranteed to bring you Money, Love, Happiness and Joy-and do it so fast your friends are going to think it's a miracle.

I'd like you to try my secret the very next time you want to become a winner at Bingo, Lotteries or Sweepstakes the very next time you want Money the very next time you want Love, Happiness and Joy. But please, don't tell anyone what you are doing.

That's because I'm afraid that if you tell anyone about the simple secret of good luck before you start using it, they might be able to talk you out of it. They will try to tell you that there is just no way to be so lucky all at once.

But there is.

And, I'm sure that if you try it privately for just two weeks - no one will ever be able to talk you out of it then.

Before I go on, I'd like to tell you that I'm not a miracle worker or a mystic of any kind.

I'm a businessman. A short time ago, I was a businessman who was extremely unlucky. Not anymore.

I'm still not the richest man in the world - or the most successful in love -but finally, after years of miserable luck in everything - I feel like the luckiest man in New York.

It's wonderful.

For years I played Bingo, entered Contests, Lotteries and Sweepstakes tried to find true Happiness, Love and Affection. I was a typical loser at everything.

Then, by accident, I stumbled onto the real secret of great good luck. The very first time I played Bingo after I discovered my secret I hit a Jackpot Bingo for \$373.

I discovered the secret in a tiny antique shop in my neighborhood - a lovely combination pendant/key chain in the form of a Lucky Horseshoe. It was finished in gleaming 14k gold and my heart practically stopped when I spotted it.

The shopkeeper told me the history of the amulet - how for hundreds of



years men and women have believed with all their hearts and souls that the golden Lucky Horseshoe had the mystic power to bring riches beyond belief, unlimited love and affection, supreme happiness - to all who used it.

I felt I had found the answer - the true secret of good luck - and I bought the one-of-a-kind Lucky Horseshoe for

over a hundred dollars.

I started to use it at once. I started to win at Bingo consistently - to win Contests and Lotteries - to find the Happiness, Joy and Love I had been seeking for so very long.

When my friends saw that I had become "the luckiest man in town" they asked me to give them my secret. Since I had now found everything in life I wanted - I decided to give it to them.

I had a master jeweler create five exact copies of my golden Lucky Horseshoe - three as key chains with proper attachments for keys - two as pendants - complete with matching golden chains. I gave them as gifts to my five closest friends.

It worked for them, too!

Now, you and I both know that there's a great deal of money to be made for the person who comes up with the true secret of good luck - a secret that really works. I am certain that I have done just that.

But, was the astounding good fortune brought to me and my friends a fluke? Perhaps there was something "special" about us that made the golden Lucky Horseshoe so very powerful. I don't believe that for a moment.

However, I MUST PROVE IT! For, once I prove that my golden Lucky Horseshoe works - really works I will offer it to all men and women who want and need great good luck for \$15 - and it will be worth every penny of it. (How many times have you said to yourself that you'd pay a fortune for something that really works?)

So, to prove that my golden Lucky Horseshoe works for ALL men and women - I'll send you either the pendant or the key chain for little more than the cost of making it up.

Remember, I'm willing to do this for my own selfish reason. Once YOU have become a Winner - once YOU find all the Money you need - once YOU have all the Love, Joy, Happiness and Affection you want – I'll probably make a mint when I offer the PROVEN amulet to the general public.

But, you must make me a promise. You must let me know your good luck results. This will be the proof I need!

I feel certain that it makes no difference whether you are a man or a woman (it works for both) - no difference if you are young or old-and even if you have until today always considered yourself unlucky — your golden Lucky Horseshoe MUST work for you or it won't cost you a single penny.

You are GUARANTEED good luck, or your money back - without quibble

or question.

And, although your golden Lucky Horseshoe pendant or key chain is GUARANTEED to bring you the best things in life almost at once - the cost to you is just \$7-that's right-just \$7.

Let me repeat. It makes absolutely no difference how many ways you've tried and failed to attract great good luck in the past - your lucky day has finally arrived.

Send for your guaranteed golden Lucky Horseshoe as soon as you can -TODAY if at all possible!

Make check payable and mail to:

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### EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

### Peter King

Editor-in-Chief

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Probably the best kept secret in wrestling is the scouting reports which sanctioned officials turn in after every wrestling show in the U.S. and Canada. These reports are sent to a main office in Oberlin, Ohio, where they are processed and recorded. Their contents have never been seen by the general public. Until now, that is. You see, I have acquired a copy of this top secret book. In this month's column I will reveal a few of the more interesting reports.

NICK BOCKWINKLE [Dec. 1977]: "Bockwinkle seems to be relying more than ever on illegal tactics. He may be starting to slip a bit. His title reign appears to be in considerable jeopardy."

DUSTY RHODES [Jan. 1978]: "Rhodes is an athlete at the peak of his career. However, it is doubtful he will win a world title until he learns how to control his emotions. A super wrestler, a great man."

ANDRE THE GIANT [Nov. 1977]: "Still young, still improving. Is among the top two or three grapplers in the world. If he will only settle down in one area, he is sure to win a world title."

BOB BACKLUND [Jan. 1978]: "All reports on this young man are accurate. He may indeed be the finest wrestler in the world today.

Probably the best hope to topple Graham. Learning, improving every day."

HARLEY RACE [Oct. 1977]: "He may be the smartest wrestler around.

Cunning, tactical, has very few flaws in style. Will hold title until

he commits a fatal mistake. A wrestler to fear at all times."

KEN PATERA [Dec. 1977]: "This man uses the most vicious tactics of any wrestler I've ever seen. His strength is terrifying. On any given night, can beat any wrestler in the world."

If you enjoyed reading these scouting reports, let me know. I'll try and print some more in a future issue.

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"I earn my living by keeping executives in top shape," says Bob. "My customers want results and they want them fast. I recommend Bullworker for one reason only: because it's the most advanced fitness trainer on the market and you better believe it."

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SHOULDERS

ABDOMEN



Behind
the
bressing
Room
Door
by Randy
Gordon

APTAIN LOU ALBANO, stick it in your ear! I just wish every wrestling fan in the country could have seen you degraded and humiliated in your battle against Arnold Skoaland. That night was the high point of my wrestling career.

As it turned out, it seemed as if every wrestling fan was there. New York's Madison Square Garden was packed to capacity. Fans were standing in the aisles. The tension in the air that night made my entire body quiver.

In his dressing room, Arnold paced the floor nervously. Sweat rolled from his brow as he thought about his match against Albano—which was only minutes away.

"There isn't an empty seat in the entire arena, is there?" Skoaland asked me.

"Not one," I replied. "This place is splitting at the seams."

The match is now history. But I must tell you about one incident which happened before the match.

Arnold and I had expected trouble from Albano before the match. Not wanting to take any chances, I offered Skoaland the services of my two personal bodyguards, Wayne Kelly and Butch Salibene. Both are imposing figures, to say the least. Wayne stands just over six feet tall and has muscles on his muscles. He can crush a fully inflated basketball with little effort. Butch is also awesome. A mountain of a man, he stands well over six feet tall and weighs close to 325 pounds. He considers a fair fight himself against five other men.

It turned out that we desperately needed Wayne and Butch. For as Skoaland and I talked, we heard a scuffle (Continued on page 48)

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WILLIAMSBURG, VIR-GINIA—Rick Steamboat brought me to this historic location. Of course, I had always meant to come here. I just never had a reason before. Now I did.

I have to be honest. I did not get particularly excited about the prospect of interviewing Rick Steamboat. After all, why should I? Just because he beat a certain hated wrestler (whose name I refuse to mention in this column ever again)? That didn't interest me. That he was proclaimed as one of the best new talents in the sport didn't interest me either. So why did I want this interview? Maybe it's just that I viewed Rick Steamboat as a puzzle.

Steamboat is a modest, reserved sort of fellow in a sport where it is expected of a man to be constantly tooting his own horn. He is like a pool of tranquility in an ocean of unrest. Steamboat is the odd man out. That is what intrigued me about him. That is why I arranged this interview.

We met in one of the three taverns at the historial restoration. We started our interview over bowls of hot peanut soup and tankards of dark ale. By the time we had eaten the oven-fresh pecan pie, I had learned quite a bit about young Mr. Steamboat.

Rick was extremely reluctant to talk at first. He was not at ease being interviewed in this kind of one-on-one situation. So we spent the first few minutes in inconsequential conversation, discussing mutual friends. The talk was light, until we began talking about Rick himself, and his own plans for his career.

"I know I need a direction," Steamboat told me, "but I'm not sure how to find it. Certainly there is pressure on me by my family to stay as a scientific wrestler. But there is equal pressure in the other direction. After all, do you know where the money is in wrestling? Do you? It is not in being a scientific wrestler. A perfect

example of this is what happened to Ken Patera. He was a scientific wrestler, and his career went nowhere—fast. He became a rulebreaker, and now he is spending money like a sailor on a spree. And he never seems to be at a loss for cash. Does this mean something?

"On the other hand, I have managed to build up a small group of loyal fans. They like me as a scientific wrestler. How would I ever be able to face them if I became a rulebreaker? They'd leave me in a flash, for good cause. No man can expect that kind of blind loyalty from any fan. They'd leave me, I know it.

"But still, there are bills to pay. Money is tight. A little loose cash would be very nice."

Not for any man will I step out of my role as reporter. I know Rick is seeking advice from me as to whether or not he should consider becoming a rulebreaker. But that is not for me to decide. Personally, it



Steamboat puts a painful armlock on Ric Flair. Is it possible that Rick may soon start wrestling like Flair does?

wouldn't make one bit of difference to me one way or the other. A man can do whatever he wants, so long as it makes him happy. I told Ken Patera the same thing once. And he did what he wanted to do.

But I could see that Rick was troubled by this dilemma. He had (Continued on page 54)

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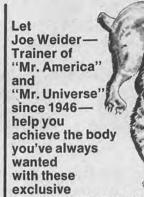
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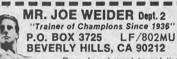


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# By Dan Shocket

HERE'S SOMETHING
ABOUT power that attracts
beautiful women. I thought
about that as this beautiful
blonde bit off the end of my
cigar. She rollled it around her
lips and then stuck it in my
mouth. From that moment on, I
knew the annual Wrestling
Managers Convention was the
place to be.

All the greats in wrestling strategy were there. For three days, the Hawaiian Regent Hotel hosted these renown grappling geniuses. There were dinners, seminars, informal discussions, and lectures by the top men in the profession. A man could learn more about wrestling during this convention than if he watched the sport constantly for six years. It was an honor to be there. That's the way the beautiful women of Hawaii looked at it, so they flocked to the hotel-

But this would have been a great three days even if it had been held in a monastery. Like great men in any profession, wrestling managers are witty as well as wise. The complex strategy discussions were often punctuated by hilarious practical jokes or recklessly funny stunts. These are human beings of the highest order.

If I could only retain one memory, I think it would be the

discussion held from midnight to dawn in Lou Albano's suite. It started out as an evening of anecdotes, each man telling of his own successes and failures. However, by the stroke of 12, the gathering was in heated discussion about various wrestling strategies.

The assembled were Albano, Bobby Heenan, Gary Hart, Lord



My friend, the great Grand Wizard. He proves that brains and money do indeed go hand in hand.

Al Hays, Grand Wizard, and J.J. Dillon. Over drinks, they brought years of genius to the informal forum.

"I can make a wrestler out of any guy over 250 pounds," Albano declared. "It's the easiest thing in the world. All it takes is four weeks with the Captain, and the man can become a main event attraction. I'm not saying he can be champion, but at least main event."

"You're not giving them their due," Wizard argued.

"Granted, a manager is the most important thing. He's the guide for greatness. But it takes more than just weight. Give the guys some credit for a little athletic ability. Not much, mind you, but enough to tie their shoelaces by themselves. Remember Fred "Monster" Thomas."

Everyone laughed. As Albano rang room service for more liquor and pineapples, the men traded stories about this clumsy grappler Lou tried to manage early in his career. The most telling incident in Thomas' short career was the time he ensnarled himself in the ropes trying to get into the ring. It took 15 minutes and a maintenance man to free him. The poor fellow was exhausted before the match began. Thomas still holds the record for being pinned in the shortest period of time.

"Let me change my statement slightly," Albano replied.
"Any guy over 250 pounds can be a wrestler if he has brains.
Give me a smart guy over a strong one any time. Thomas

(Continued on page 56)

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Joe proudly poses with his famous pupil, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Mr. Olympia winner

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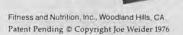
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## NAMES MAKI

Secret negotiations are presently in progress in the WWWF regarding the scientific battle of a lifetime. Promoters are mulling over a contract which could send BOB BACKLUND into combat against all-time great BRUNO SAMMARTINO! What a match that would be—the youth, speed and agility of Backlund pitted against the vast experience of the veteran two-time WWWF champion.



**BOB BACKLUND** 



**BRUNO SAMMARTINO** 



THE VALIANT BROTHERS

He may be a fan favorite in the northwest, but JESSE VENTURA is nothing but a "rotten two-faced bum" according to correspondent Mike Leu in Hawaii. Mike also reports Ventura and his partner the equally hated STEVE STRONG, now own the Hawaiian tag team title . . . Is it splitsville for JIM and JOHN VALIANT? The brothers are appearing less and less frequently as a tag team and have



STEVE STRONG



### DICK SLATER

both accepted numerous single commitments in various parts of the country . . . Another tag team that may be going sour is PETER MAIVIA and CHIEF JAY STRONGBOW. There are no hard feelings here. Strongbow wants to spend more time wrestling single bouts while Maivia is more interested in tag team competition. Maivia has been teaming with DOM DeNUCCI in recent weeks. They are hoping to take the WWWF tag team belts from PROFESSOR TANAKA and MR. FUJI.

PAUL JONES has issued a formal challenge for PROFESSOR BORIS MALENKO (manager of MASKED SUPERMAN) to wrestle him in Boris' favorite type of bout, a "Russian Chain Match." . . . STAN HANSEN hit DICK SLATER full force with the neckbreaking "lariat." The aftermath: Slater did not suffer any injury! With a sigh of relief, Dick admits, "It was sheer luck." . . . TOMMY RICH and

## N'NEWS

Bill Apter reporting...

TONY ATLAS are the new owners of the Georgia tag team title . . . U.S. Champion RICK STEAM-BOAT silenced his critics when he held NWA champion HARLEY RACE to a sizzling one hour draw.

Down in Texas, JIMMY SNUKA and MIL MASCARAS are discussing a possible partnership . . . CAPTAIN LOU ALBANO is not sure whether or not he will renew his contract to manage THE GOLDEN TERROR . . . High flying JOHNNY RIVERA is headed to the west coast . . . AWA Champion NICK BOCKWINKLE turned down a multi-million dollar offer to wrestle former NWA champion JACK BRISCO. "I told Nick to turn the offer down," said BOBBY HEENAN, Bockwinkle's manager. "I don't want him to wrestle Brisco-ever!" When asked why he felt that way. Heenan refused to comment any further . . . The team of BOB ROOP and BOB ORTON JR. has returned to Florida. In their initial appearance, Roop and Orton crippled one half of the tag team they wrestled! . . . BARON VON RASCHKE is upset at the rumors saying his clawhold will soon be barred from wrestling.

KILLER BROOKS says "Texas fans are a bunch of morons for cheering ERNIE LADD."...RIC FLAIR ventures to Florida to take on the challenge of ROCKY JOHNSON...IVAN PUTSKI has stopped the rumors that he will tag team with MIGHTY IGOR...LARRY ZBYSZKO has shown a marked improvement in his matches. Larry claims that he did too much tag team wrestling last year and will cut his tag schedule in half during 1978.



LOU ALBANO

GINO HERNANDEZ is upset because JOHN STUDD is no longer in Texas. "He left before I had a chance to show him who's boss!" said Gino. "Studd ran off at the mouth that he could beat me with ease. Finally, when it appeared we would wrestle, that snake left. What a coward he is!" In his anger, Gino failed to realize



**GINO HERNANDEZ** 

that Studd had to leave. He had lost a "Loser Leaves Town" match and had no choice in the matter... CYCLONE NEGRO is heading to the Mid-Atlantic areas... THE DESTROYER (Not to be



CYCLONE NEGRO



**DINO BRAVO** 

confused with SUPER DE-STROYER) is planning an extended U.S. tour. The masked man lives in Japan and spends most of his time grappling in that country.

BLACKJACK MULLIGAN says DINO BRAVO refuses to wrestle him, "because I make that (Continued on page 50)



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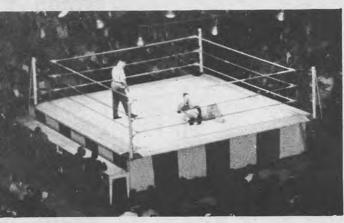
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We received many letters regarding our poll on whether or not Superstar Graham (above) passes or fails as champion. A Syrian exchange student wrote in to complain about the way in which Sheik (below) is treated in the press. He thinks Sheik should be considered a hero!

### **HE PASSES**

Regarding the story, "It's Your Decision: Does Superstar Graham Pass or Fail as Champion?" (January 1978), I think Graham has passed with flying colors.

He is indeed the best wrestler around. With no Superstar, there is no dignity and no skill. Therefore, I think everyone should give passing grades to Superstar Graham. We should be proud to have such a skillful wrestler as champion of the WWWF.

PATRICK NARDELLI Newark, N.J.



### WE FAILED?

The editors of INSIDE WRESTLING should be ashamed of themselves. I just sent in my report card grading Superstar Graham. I've been reading your magazine for a long time, and you never asked us to grade men like Bruno Sammartino. I am certainly not a Graham supporter, but I do not think it is right to grade a champion as to whether or not he should pass as a champion.

If you think Graham is a disgrace to the sport, I give you three cheers because you are right. I was really sad when Bruno lost his belt, but I knew the era had to end sometime.

Still, it was not right to treat Graham like you did.

JACK BEDELL Houma, La.

### SHEIK SUPPORTER

A am a Syrian exchange student studying in the United States, and I am very depressed to see the character of the exaulted Sheik so badly maligned in this country.

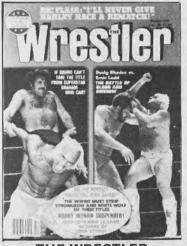
In my native Syria, The Sheik is loved and respected. He is considered our national hero. What most American wrestling fans consider as cruel and unfair is really typical of the tactics used by wrestlers in my country. That Sheik is the best Arabian wrestler proves he is the

(Continued on page 44)

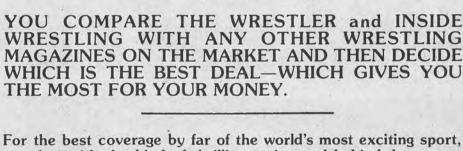
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S HE SAT in his dressing room, his bones weary and his muscles aching, Paul Jones tried to ignore the knocking on his door. There were several reporters out in the hall. They all wanted to speak with him. They all had questions. They all needed answers.

Paul was not afraid of their questions; indeed, he has never been afraid of the press. Yet he was worried about how they would react to what he had to say. He had gone over these thoughts in his head many times. He wanted to make sure what he would say reflected

exactly what he felt. He wanted to make sure the reporters clearly understood the statement he was about to make. A failure in communications between Jones and the press could lead to a serious misunderstanding.

Slowly, he rose from the training table and opened the door for the press. Like a bursting dam, the press quickly flooded the room, making for a sea of humanity in which it was nearly impossible to breathe. This disturbed Paul. He needed room. He needed that gap in which to make his point.

The reporters sensed this need for space. They backed

# Paul Jones' Shocking Claim: 66 GREG Which to make The reporte need for space WALLENTINE WALLENTINE The reporte need for space WALLENTINE THE bursting dam, to flooded the root sea of humanit nearly imposs This disturbed room. He need which to make The reporte need for space WALLENTINE WALLENTINE TO SERVICE TO SERVICE THE PAUL OF TH

Greg Valentine puts his all into an effort to break Paul Jones' leg. Paul survived this onslaught, and is now convinced he can survive anything.



A frustrated Greg Valentine continues to attack Jones' left leg. Paul is confident that matches against Greg Valentine—no matter how brutal—will in the long run make him a better wrestler, perhaps even NWA champion.

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER

"It is a well-known fact that Greg Valentine is a ruthless, cunning, vicious young man. He can maim opponents. I know. He's tried to maim me on several occasions. And that is my point. I have been engaged in this feud with Valentine for a long time now. It has been bloody. Some will say it has been senseless. Some people might go as far as to say it has been suicidal. I disagree.

"Valentine has done his worst to me. His absolute worst. And what has happened? I ache. I'm in intense pain at times. I've lost a lot of blood. All that is obvious. But one thing is obvious: I'm still

## ILL MAKE ME CHAMPION!"

away from the training table. They let him speak.

"Ladies and gentlemen of the press," he intoned, "I know why you are here now. You want my reaction to that match I just had with Greg Valentine. I intend to give you that, but not just yet. I will make just one statement. There will be no questions. Hopefully, my statement will answer any inquiry you may have.

"Greg Valentine is a foolish young man. He is strong, and he

is cunning. No one can deny that. Right now, my bones ache worse than they have ever ached before. My muscles are all fatigued. It is an effort for me to move. But I have never felt better in my life. Why? The answer is very simple. I now know that Greg Valentine will make me champion.

"Yes, I know that sounds like the most preposterous claim you have ever heard. Maybe it is. I don't know. But it makes sense to me. Let me explain. here. Through the worst that Greg Valentine has to offer, I'm still here!

"Greg Valentine will make me champion. He has shown me how to counter the most vicious tactics in the sport. Of course, I'm sure he never intended this. But it has happened. And now I am ready for Harley Race. Let him be as vicious as he wants. I know what to do. I'm ready for Race . . . Thanks to Greg Valentine!

(Continued on page 46)

While most people are despairing over Paul Jones' career, the wrestler claims to be optimistic. Is it a brave front or is there a secret master plan known only by the complicated wrestler himself?

## NEWS FROM THE

If you would like your area of the country represented in these reports, while also being officially credited with your own by-line, send us reports of the matches you attend. You will have the thrill of seeing your name in an internationally known magazine while at the same time helping to improve the quality of wrestling in your area. So why not give it a try? You will be glad you did!

Send your reports to: Correspondent Editor, Box 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571

ST. PAUL, MINN.
By Bill Kolstad



NICK BOCKWINKLE vs. JIM BRUNZELL



Nick Bockwinkle's AWA championship came under attack from the stalwart challenge of young Jim Brunzell. However, after some 30 minutes of action, Bockwinkle was victorious—with the help of illegal

OTHER BOUTS: Larry "The Axe"
Hennig and Scrapiron Gadaski
couldn't handle Super Destroyer
and Lord Al Hays. Greg and Verne
Gagne dumped Bobby Heenan and
Bobby Duncum. Ray Stevens and
Angelo Mosca drew.

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA. By Eddie James



DINO BRAVO vs. MISSOURI MAULER

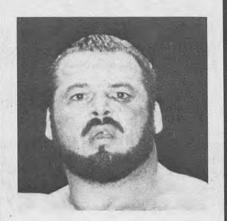


Rising superstar Dino Bravo continued his climb to the top with a smashing victory over the rough Missouri Mauler. Young Dino was awarded the match when Mauler turned tail and ran from the ring.

OTHER BOUTS Wahoo McDaniel and Rick Steamboat were too much for Ric Flair and Greg Valentine ... Bobo Brazil sent Boris Malenko to Siberia...Johnny Weaver smashed Mr. X I.

STAMFORD, CONN.

By David Kranz



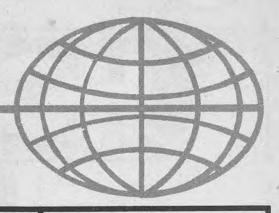
IVAN PUTSKI vs. MR. FUJI



Ivan Putski and Mr. Fuji locked horns in a great bout. Putski was disqualified when Tony Garea ran in to help the popular Pole ward off an illegal attack. Had Tony not come to Ivan's aid, Putski might have suffered a crippling injury.

OTHER BOUTS: Chief Jay Strongbow made the fans happy when he upended big Butcher Vachon . . . Tony Garea and Stan Stasiak wrestled to a draw.

# WRESTLING CAPITALS



### FT. LAUDERDALE, FLA. By Scott Stone



DON MURACO vs. SUPERSTAR GRAHAM



Superstar Graham came to the Sunshine State to defend his title against Don Muraco. The young Hawaiian proved to be quite a match for the WWWF champion, and in desperation Graham got himself disqualified.

OTHER BOUTS: Dusty Rhodes turned back Ivan Koloff . Steve Keirn won a countout victory over Nelson Royal . . . Super Gladiator ran over Tank Patton . . . Don Serrano edged Dutch Mantell.

NEW YORK, N.Y.
By Jon Swift



SUPERSTAR GRAHAM vs. MIL MASCARAS



More than 22,000 fans watched as Superstar Graham and Mil Mascaras battled in one of the best matches seen in years. Graham needed the aid of a technicality to successfully hold on to his WWWF belt.

OTHER BOUTS: Dusty Rhodes was triumphant over former WWWF king Stan Stasiak . . . Bob Backlund was sensational in totally defeating Mr. Fuji

Dec 19,1977

LOUISVILLE, KY.

By Ernie Mattingly



JERRY LAWLER vs.
JIM VALIANT



Handsome Jim Valiant and Jerry Lawler wrestled in a match for Lawler's Southern title. After some 45 minutes of action, Valiant had his hand upraised as he was the new Southern king. Lawler vows revenge.

OTHER BOUTS: Phil Hickerson and Dennis Condry upended The Samoans . . . Mike Stark took the measure of Robert Gibson.

## HOTSEAT

# BOCKWINKLE: "I'VE BROKEN GAGNE'S STRANGLEHOLD ON THE AWA!"

### BY DAN SHOCKET

HEN HE FIRST won the AWA belt, people assumed his title reign wouldn't last a month. But the month passed with no change, then months turned to a year. Top challengers fell before him time and time again. Recently, he almost lost the belt. Verne Gagne was given the title only to have it taken from him when films revealed Gagne had cheated. The AWA champion is still Nick Bockwinkle.

- Q: Welcome to the "Hotseat" and congratulations.
- A: They're sure in order. It was tense waiting for the decision to be reversed. But the films showed Verne Gagne, hero to morons, hitting my head against the steel turnbuckle. I could have been killed! But

it was worth the risk for the victory.

- Q: You'd better explain that.
- A: In detail. For longer than I can remember, Verne Gagne

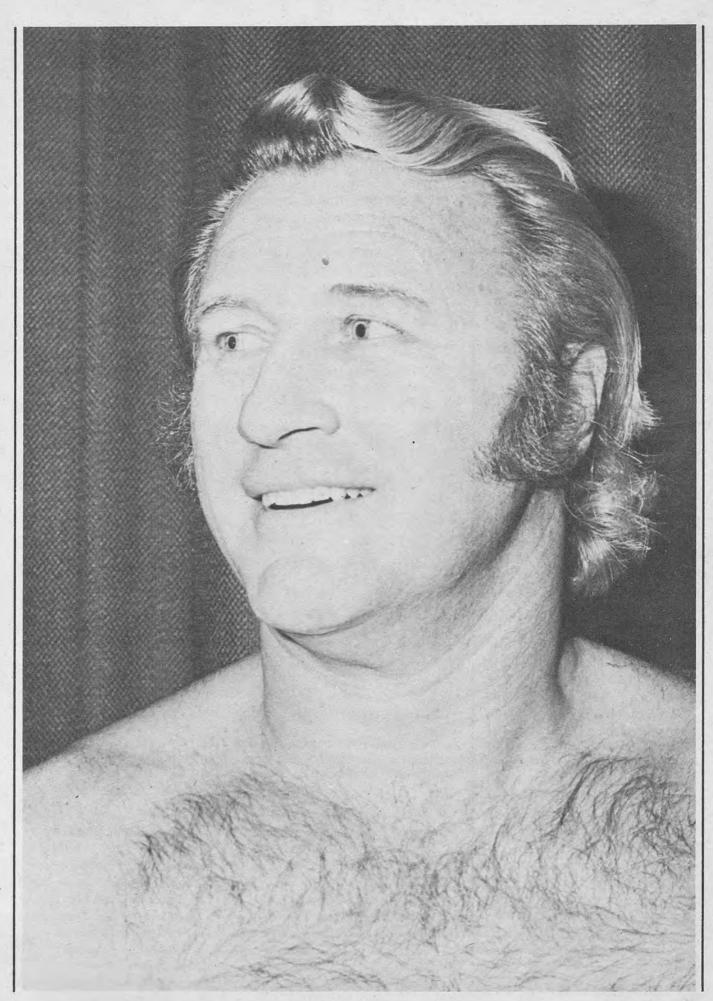
### 66

Actually, Gagne paid the referee to take a little nap, then to conveniently wake up to see him finish me with a sleeper. He did his job, so I hope Gagne pays him.

99

has owned the AWA. Every official decision has favored him. I can name 100 wrestlers who found themselves defeated in the front offices after they beat Gagne in the ring. But I changed all that.

- Q: Did you expect to?
- A: They had no choice. I have a copy of the film, and so do 15 other people. I made sure of that. And on each film Verne Gagne is clearly battering my head into the steel turnbuckle. That's an immediate disqualification in the AWA. Immediate disqualification. No ifs. No ands. No buts.
- Q: For those who didn't see the match, could you tell us why the referee didn't disqualify Gagne at that time.
- A: The referee was supposedly unconscious. Actually, Gagne paid the referee to take a little nap, then to conveniently wake up to see him finish me with a sleeper. He did his job, so I hope Gagne pays him. Think of it, Gagne lost both the title and his bribe. He also lost the AWA commissioners.





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Now, Gagne's found he can't cheat his way to victory. The commissioners will no longer roll over and play dead for him. Gagne has no power now.

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- Q: Are you sure he lost them forever?
- Absolutely. This was the big A: moment. The commissioners had to decide whether or not they would lie for him one last time. The evidence made it impossible for them to give the belt to Gagne. If they had tried, it would have been the biggest scandal in wrestling history. Now, Gagne's found he can't cheat his way to victory. The commissioners will no longer roll over and play dead for him. Gagne has no power now. It's a whole new era in AWA wrestling.
- Q: So justice will triumph?
- A: At least every once in a while.
- Q: It's been quite a tempestuous title reign for you.
- A: I've gone from the guy who wouldn't stay champ for a week to the man who's changed AWA wrestling

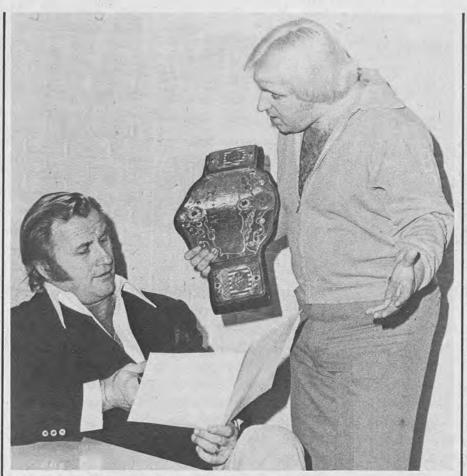
- forever. I did it with guts, brains, and more skill than any man alive.
- Q: Your manager, Bobby Heenan, had a lot to do with it, didn't he?
- A: Yeah. I don't want to talk about Heenan.
- Q: If you don't mind, Nick, I think it's time for us to discuss the rumors about you and Heenan not getting along.
- A: Heenan and I get along fine. That's all I want to say about it. This interview is with me, not Heenan.
- Q: Don't you want to dispel the rumors?
- A: I don't care. I just don't want to talk about Heenan.
- Q: What do you want to talk about?

- down in history as the man who did it.
- Q: You have every right to be proud.
- A: Damn straight! When I won the title, every expert in the sport said I was a fluke, a nobody who'd last a few days. Every opponent was supposed to be the one who'd beat me. Well, I'm still here and those guys are wrestling preliminaries in Ellis, Kansas.
- Q: Did the experts' opinion bother you?
- A: Well, I've proven myself, so why not be honest? I can't stand those creeps! Of course their opinion worried me. Who wouldn't be worried when everyone says you're a fluke about to fail? I'm like



Gagne uses all his scientific knowledge to try and pin AWA champion Nick Bockwinkle. But the clever champion bridges, showing Gagne that he too can be a master of scientific holds when he wishes.

- A: Don't you realize what I've done? Once and for all, Verne Gagne is finished. For an entire generation, this peasant has dominated wrestling. Every great wrestler in history has tried and failed to finish him. I've done it! By this time next year, Gagne will be a vague memory. My name will go A:
- everyone else. An expert says something and I figure he knows what he's talking about. Well, I'll never believe another think I read so long as I live. By the way, have you ever read anything where the experts admit they were wrong about me?
- Q: Not really.
- A: You bet you haven't. In-





stead, they print lies about Heenan being the one in control, the one who deserves all the credit.

- Q: Or blame.
- A: Or blame. They see some great conspiracy with Heenan as the head. Everyone talks about Heenan and gives me none of the credit. Who's in the ring, Heenan or me?!
- Q: I didn't realize . . .
- A: Nobody realizes how I feel. Nobody cares. It's Heenan who keeps getting interviewed. He's the one people go to. I wear the belt and he's treated like the champion. I beat Verne Gagne! I won the belt. I'm the one who goes into the ring night after night, risking my neck against the toughest men in the world. From what you



read, you'd think I was some robot Heenan controlled. I'm a human being. I also happen to be the best damn wrestler in the world. And I have the belt to prove it.

- Q: No one is disputing that.
- A: Everyone disputes that. Heenan this, Heenan that. I get on the "Hotseat" and you start talking about Heenan. A:



66

Nobody realizes how I feel. Nobody cares. It's Heenan who keeps getting interviewed. He's the one people go to. I wear the belt and he's treated like the champion.

99

I just accomplished the most important victory of my generation. I toppled a god. And you try to bring Heenan into the conversation.

- Q: Sorry.
- A: What the hell. Ask another question.
- Q: If WWWF champ Superstar Graham wrestles NWA Harley Race, will you take on the winner?
- A: Of course. I'm ready to prove who's the best wrestler in the world. The only way to do that is have a tournament. I'll not only take on the winner, but I'll also give the loser another chance. I'll defeat both men.
- Q: Have you worked out any strategies for the bouts?
- A: Heenan is working on some.
- Q: Well, Nick, that's about it. Thanks for giving us this time.
- A: Thanks for asking me.



# matt Plans Brock's BRISSING SPEAKING

BOSTON: Too many kids in this town; they make an old man feel older. Boston Garden seems to attract them like flies. Mil Mascaras had something to do with this. The man moves with a grace most of us can only envy. It's a cruel taunt to those of us with stiff joints and tight muscles. Ken Patera certainly doesn't know what I'm talking about. He struts his youth around like a diamond ring. The man is hungry, and just a little bit nuts. The idea is to avoid him. Lou Albano is his manager. You'd think the guy would have enough smarts to know he's playing with fire. Well, Albano was already greedier than he was smart.

**OMAHA:** This is a strange place for a guy used to racing home the dawn. That's when people get up around here. Am I the only person in the entire state of Nebraska who gets hungry after 9 p.m.? I got snowed in here. When I die, hell will be Omaha under a foot of snow. Angelo Mosca will be my companion. The man thinks he's Superman, and he says so for hours on end. I spent most of the conversation praying for Kryptonite. Jim Brunzell was also here, praying with me. Nice kid—though nice kids should be in some other profession. He keeps winning, though. Maybe he can be an exception.

MIAMI: Ever see a man hang up a telephone and start to shake? I watched Lars Anderson do that. His face drained of color. His eyes went glassy. It was probably none of my business, but I asked him what was wrong. He called me a dirty name. I deserved it. But I'll bet he got the wrong person angry

at him. Guys who look like Anderson often wind up in the unsolved murders file. On the other side of the coin, Steve Keirn isn't thrilled with me, either. Righteous people make me nervous. The kid has never been down, never really scared. We just didn't hit it off. I know how easy it is to go wrong. Keirn will never know. He's lucky, I guess. No sense trading off his security or my friendship.



**STAN STASIAK** 

**NEW HAVEN:** As always, Stan Stasiak was merciless. Watching him makes me sad. About two years ago, when most of the world was asleep, Stasiak told me he'd like to try being scientific, but the time for that is gone. He said, "I can't be anything else. I'm the prisoner of my past. I figure there were four or five choices that decided my life. That's not many for a life, is it?" Stasiak probably doesn't remember the

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

conversation. I'll never forget it. Thinking about it, I want something to drink. It won't change anything, and that's the reason I need the drink.

GREENSBORO: There's nothing quieter than a North Carolina night during the week. It takes someone like Wahoo McDaniel to make it come alive. I listened for more than two hours about how he wants to be champion. We went from the arena to a truck-stop diner. There we met a couple of guys who didn't like professional wrestlers or sportswriters. Wahoo kept talking about the thrill of wearing a title belt while the truckers continued to hurl insults at us. Finally, one of them hurled a glass of water in Wahoo's face. Controlling his temper, Wahoo said in the coldest whisper I'd ever heard, "If your truck isn't gone in two minutes, you'll leave in an ambulance." The truckers were gone 38 seconds before they had to. After they'd gone, Wahoo declared, "Champions don't bother with punks."

RICHMOND: A friend of mine died yesterday. Of every writer I knew, he was the one who was truly going to write the great American novel. But he always got sidetracked. Something was always more important. Now he'll never write it. I saw Paul Jones today. He has a lot in common with my friend. He spends his time with feuds battling for something other than the championship. Late last night, after the bartender told me for the eighth time the place was closing, I wondered if my friend was afraid to write the book, whether he used any excuse he could not to actually do it. The same thing could apply to Paul Jones. This leads us to the terrifying question. Do not ask what is it, let's just make another visit.

**DETROIT:** This place stinks of money in the hands of too few. No wonder Sheik feels comfortable here. There was nothing better to do, so I followed the man after he left the



THE SHEIK

arena. He mailed a letter, went to a diner for coffee (he takes three teaspoons of sugar) and back to a motel room. Just like anybody else. What did you expect? A coven of witches that locked him in the basement? A magical transformation that made him into a humpbacked ogre with three eyes? Sheik is like anyone else in a lot of ways. There's a little Sheik in everyone else. Maybe that's why I don't sleep well at night.

\*\*

The notes on my desk are piled up too high. There has to be a reason for it all, some great truth I'm missing. Maybe I'm too old to understand anymore. Maybe there is no great truth, just a series of incidents randomly acted out. Right now, I've got to keep typing or take another drink.

# TOP WRESTLE TOP WRESTLE

Do you have a question which concerns all of wrestling? Well, each month in INSIDE WRESTLING, the sport's greatest stars will answer a question sent in by a reader. If you wish to have your question answered by the stars, send it to: ASK THE STARS, INSIDE WRESTLING, Box 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y.



MIL MASCARAS

"The most dangerous thing I can think of is doing a flying bodypress against a man like Stan Stasiak. This is not to say I won't do it . . . I just feel it is dangerous, because he has clever ways of thwarting it."



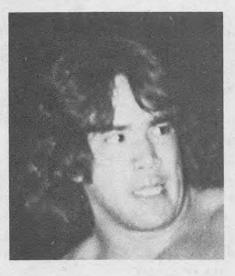
TERRY FUNK

"Wrestling in a Texas Bull Rope match is the most dangerous thing I do. Hell, I know men who have gone into these matches and come out crippled for life. They're dangerous battles. Damn dangerous!"



"What is the most dangerous thing you do in the ring?"

Submitted by: Ricardo Elvir; Kansas City, Missouri



### **RICK STEAMBOAT**

"Even being in the same arena with Ric Flair is dangerous. Can you imagine what it's like facing him in the ring. However, I know that I have to wrestle him, and I come prepared to put my life on the line."



### JIMMY SNUKA

"I have learned the most dangerous thing I can do is to break my concentration—even for a few seconds. I must keep my mind on every move I make. Otherwise, I am giving an opponent an advantage."

## RS ANSWER OF THE MONTH



### **PAUL JONES**

"A Boston Crab, when executed poorly, can be more dangerous for the man who does it than for the intended victim. Believe me, I know. It can be the most dangerous thing any man can do during a match."



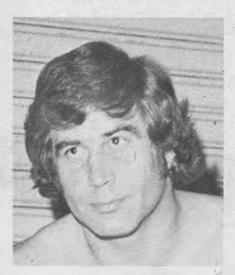
### **RAY STEVENS**

"Listen, I always know full well what I'm doing when I wrestle. Hell, if I wasn't sure of myself, I would never get into the ring. Nothing I do is any more dangerous than anything else I do."



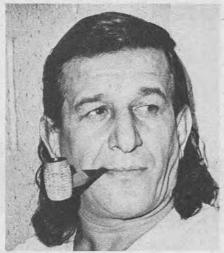
### MR. WRESTLING II

"I get a little worried anytime an opponent tries to execute a move which could injure my neck. Therefore, I try to keep them away from that part of my body. Otherwise, I know I would be in serious trouble again."



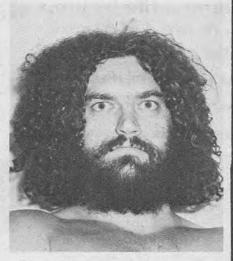
### **JACK BRISCO**

"As far as I'm concerned, the most dangerous thing I can do in the ring is to be unprepared for my opponent. In order to do my best, I have to know what to expect from the man I wrestle. Otherwise, I could get hurt!"



### **CHIEF JAY STRONGBOW**

"The most dangerous thing I can do in the ring is to lose control. If I do that, I might as well concede the match. When some rulebreaker forces me to brawl, I simply can't handle what happens. People get injured."



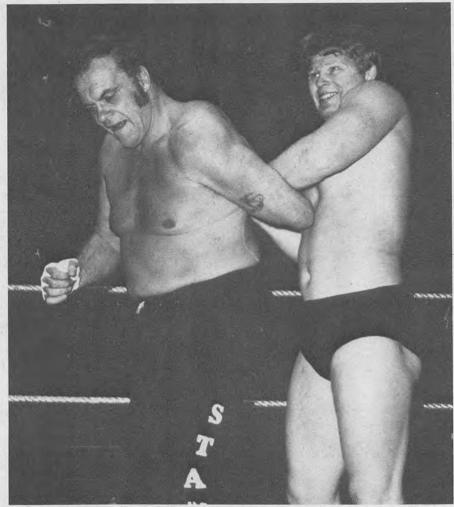
### **BRUISER BRODIE**

"I am invincible. I don't have to worry about doing anything dangerous because I know these bums I'm forced to wrestle can't hurt me. The only thing I worry about is opponents who bribe the referees to disqualify me."

BY NOW, everyone has heard of the amazing talents of this singularly tremendous young man. His rise to fame has been quicker than any other person's in the history of the sport. He is a wrestling success story who has inspired everyone connected with the sport. And he is certainly in contention for the WWWF championship.

What Bob Backlund has done in a short period of time is nothing short of phenomenal. He has shown he can wrestle the most ruthless rulebreakers and the most scientific of men and still keep winning. He does not lose his poise. He does not become undone in the face of a serious challenge. In short, Bob Backlund is the

Before this young man can prove himself worthy of a title, Bob Backlund must endure a rite by fire. There are 12 tests in this ordeal. The first has been gloriously completed



Former WWWF champion Stan Stasiak has his hands full when the sensational Bob Backlund uses a hammerlock to stop him in his tracks.

consummate professional wrestler. He does very well.

In spite of all Bob has done in the past two years, there are still people who do not believe he is as good as he appears to be. Of course, it is their right to have such an opinion. However, there is one exclusive group of people who must be counted among this larger group—the promoters of the WWWF.

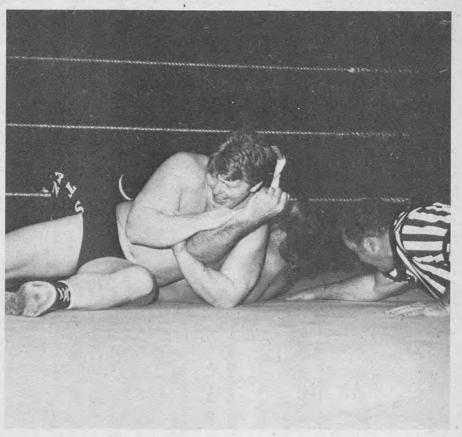
Quite simply, they are not convinced Bob Backlund is all he appears to be. They want proof before they let him wrestle for the WWWF title.

## IZ CHAMF TEST 1: STAN

Twelve tests. Each one equally difficult. Each one equally important.

Bob agreed. He is sure of his abilities.

According to sources close to the promoters, the 12 tests are not necessarily matches against other wrestlers. Bob must prove his moral character as well, though no one doubts he will pass these tests with ease. In fact, he may have already done so. Therefore, the interest centers around the men Backlund must defeat. For once he has beaten all these wrestlers, he will surely be given a chance to wrestle for the WWWF title. There will be no more roadblocks in his path. (Continued on page 52)



Backlund forces Stasiak to the mat as he applies pressure to Stan's left arm. This match showed everyone just how good Bob Backlund can be.

# BUB BACKLUND'S BACKLUN

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER

# STINES.

These Ratings Are Compiled With The Assistance Of Top Wrestlers, Promoters, And Reporters. They Are Universally Accepted As Official

### World Wide Federation Wrestling



Champion: SUPERSTAR GRAHAM



1-BOB BACKLUND

### Association American Wrestling



Champion: NICK BOCKWINKLE



1-VERNE GAGNE

### Wrestling National Alliance



Champion: HARLEY RACE

1-DUSTY RHODES



1-DUSTY RHODES

2-BOB BACKLUND

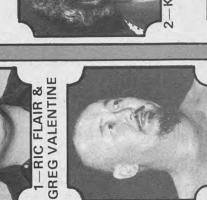
## **Most Popular** Wrestlers

Tag Teams

**Most Hated** 

Wrestlers





2-KEN PATERA



1-RIC FLAIR





2-MIL MASCARAS



3-DUSTY RHODES





-KEN PATERA









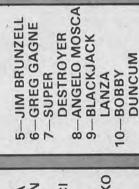
2-RAY STEVENS



3-LARRY HENNIG



4-BILLY ROBINSON





NOSNHOL 2-ROCKY

-ANDRE THE

GIANT



3-RIC FLAIR

4-MIL MASCARAS



4-DICK SLATER

NOSNHOC

5-ROCKY





STAN HANSEN



GREG GAGNE & JIM BRUNZELL



6-IVAN PUTSKI

7-WAHOO

McDANIEL



SUPERSTAR



VALENTINE 5-GREG

SPIROS ARION **BARON VON** DESTROYER BLACKJACK MULLIGAN RASCHKE SUPER 80 9

10-THE SHEIK

MR. WRESTLING

10-

STEAMBOAT

**DINO BRAVO** 

RICK

8 6

T'S AS COMMON as lice on a dog. Once a man becomes respected and loved, envious snipers spread vile lies, as ugly as they are untrue. And like lice, these vermin dig into the flesh and must be washed clean as quickly as possible. Today, Dusty Rhodes feels the lies gnawing at him.

The first lie wounds Dusty the deepest. It can be heard most anywhere, at times spread by people innocent if stupid. Those who know Dusty realize there is no more damnable falsehood.

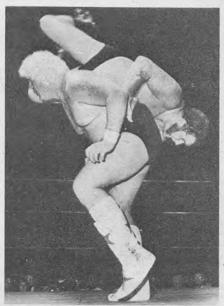
The lie goes like this: "Dusty is the biggest phony in the world. He really hates the fans, makes fun of them and burns all their letters unread. At heart, he's still the rulebreaker, no different than when he teamed up with Dick Murdoch and terrorized wrestling as a member of The Outlaws. He's waiting to make his bundle as a fan favorite and then go back to rulebreaking."

This despicable tale is heard throughout wrestling. When Dusty wrestled in the WWWF, certain wrestlers spread it with maniacal glee. These rats, like Superstar Billy Graham and Stan Stasiak, even believed it to be true. However, there are even some scientific wrestlers, especially those who suffered at the hands of The Outlaws, who wondered if it could indeed be the truth. They should have known better.

As everyone should know, there is a magical union between Dusty and the fans. This can't be based on a lie. No one could fool that many people. It just can't be done. The proof of Dusty's love for the fans is apparent every time he enters an arena.

There is one moment in our memory which proves that everyone who believes this lie is

# DON'T BELL THOSE ABOUT DUS





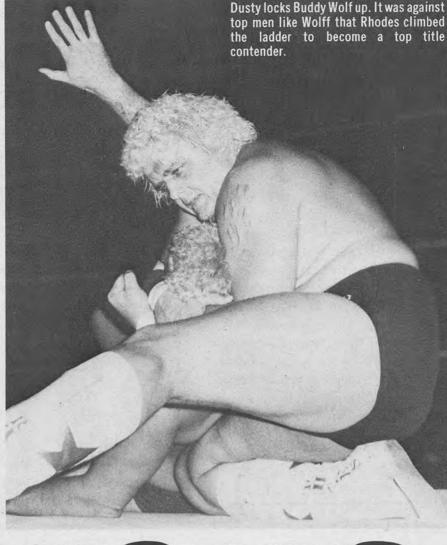
After Dusty failed to capture the NWA title from Harley Race (left) and the WWWF title from Superstar Graham (above), lies started circulating that he was not as good as he used to be.

either a fool or evil. Dusty sat in the dressing room, reading his fan mail. All of a sudden, Dusty looked up and there were tears in his eyes. Too choked to speak, he handed the letter to friends.

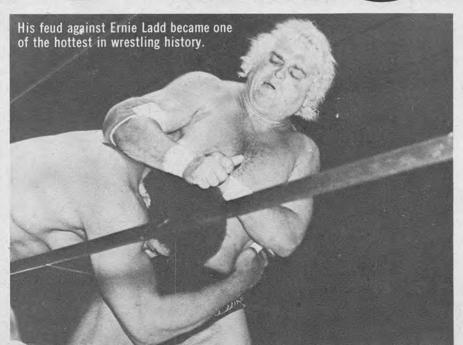
"Dear Dusty," it said, "I've never written to anyone before. I never had anyone to write to. I'm an orphan. There are about 10 of us here in the orphanage who think you're the greatest. We like to believe you're our big brother who is doing real well for himself. We don't know what will happen to us once we get too old for the orphanage. It would be nice to know someone out there cares just

The rumors have been going around, their stench spreading into every corner of wrestling.

The air must be cleared, the lies brought out into the open and proven false. Read this story for the good of wrestling



# TY RHODES



a little. Good luck with all your matches."

That night, Dusty massacred his opponent. A week later, Dusty took all 10 orphans out to the biggest dinner of their entire lives. They still write regularly to Dusty.

This is a man who is fooling the fans? Not in this lifetime!

The second lie concerns Dusty's failure so far to win a world title (the same kind of thing people said about Superstar Billy Graham before he became WWWF champion). People claim Dusty panics when he is faced with the big ones. The rumor currently

(Continued on page 58)

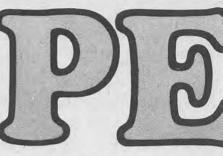
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If you join "The Wonderful World of Pen Pals," you can make new friends throughout the world. And all of your new pen pals will be wrestling fans too! We will print your picture right here in this magazine, and also a little bit of information about who you are. That way, your new pen pals will know something about you even before they start to send you their letters! Just thinkyou can have the chance to receive mail from all over the world! All you have to do is fill out the coupon below and mail it to us, along with a recent picture. We'll take it from there.

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Favorite Wi	restler	
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### the Wonderful World of





ANTHONY CHIARADIO (14) 509 Reed St.
Philadelphia, PA 19147
Enjoys hockey. Baron
Von Raschke his favorite.
Likes good and bad guys.
Girls for pen pals.



BERNICE VALENTINE (12) Route 1 Box 121 Iva, SC 29655 Likes basketball. Wahoo McDaniel her favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for PP's.



JUAN ORTIZ (15) 1416 Lafayette St. Lebanon, PA 17042 Enjoys tennis. Bruno Sammarino his favorite. Likes good guys. Girls for pen pals.



DAVE KAUZLARIC (12) 632 Mason St. Rhinelander, WI 54501 Enjoys sports. Greg Gagne his favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



RONNIE SMITHPETERS (11) Route 2 Newport, TN 37821 Likes baseball. Ron Fuller his favorite. Likes good and bad guys. Anyone for PP's.



MARVIN JOHNSON (12) 1602 Aldine St. Hillside, NJ 07205 Enjoys drawing. Bruno Sammartino his favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



MARK GAGNE (11) 6558 Winthrop Detroit, MI 48228 Enjoys football. Gino Hernandez his favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



DARRYL YOUNG (11) 82 E. Market St. Long Beach, NY 11561 Likes basketball. Andre the Giant his favorite. Likes good guys. Boys for pen pals.



JAMES WEYGANT (26) 122 E. Main Middletown, NY 10940 Enjoys sports. Bruno Sammartino his favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



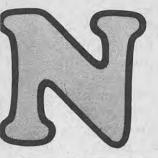
CARMINE CUSANO (10) 57 Boulanger Ave. West Hartford, CT 06110 Likes hockey. Billy Graham his favorite. Likes bad guys. Girls for pen pals.



REESE ROBINSON (20) 146-11 N. Conduit Ave. S. Ozone Park, NY 11436 Enjoys acting. Bruno Sammartino his favorite. Likes good guys. Girls for pen pals.



GLENN FELDMAN (12) 12 Kakiat Lane Spring Valley, NY 10977 Collects coins. Bruiser his favorite. Likes good and bad guys. Anyone for pen pals.



# PAILS



DENNIS BARTOLI (12) 37 Second Avenue Bay Shore, NY 11706 Likes skateboarding. Bruno Sammartino his favorite. Likes good guys. Girls for PP's.



DAVID BRODY (11) 117 Sharpe St. Kingston, PA 18704 Enjoys football. Chief Strongbow his favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



BRIAN GUDVANGER (15) 7347 2nd St. Rt. 7 Fort Myers, FL 33905 Likes baseball. Dusty Rhodes his favorite. Likes good guys. Girls for pen pals.



ALLEN DENNIS (9).
Rt. 1 Box 225A
Scranton, SC 29591
Enjoys football. Dusty
Rhodes his favorite.
Likes good guys.
Boys for pen pals.



DANNY SHADLE (6) Box 100 RD 2 Lock Haven, PA 17745 Likes sports. Andre the Giant his favorite. Likes good guys. Boys for pen pals.



DELLA STAPP (11) 1240 W. Meighan Blvd. Gadsden, AL 35902 Likes horses. Paul Jones her favorite. Likes good and bad guys. Anyone for PP's.



REITH CAMP (13) Rt. 1 Box 182 New Salisbury, IN 47161 Likes sports. Rocky Johnson his favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



TOMMY PATTON (13) Rt. 2 Box 129 Comer, GA 30629 Enjoys football. Andre the Giant his favorite. Likes good guys. Girls for pen pals.



FELIX ALEJANDRO (15) 467 Sixth Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11215 Likes baseball. Bruno Sammartino his favorite. Likes good guys. Girls for pen pals.



PATTY HAGENS (12) 163 Jacobstown Rd. Wrightstown, NJ 08562 Enjoys music. Chief Strongbow her favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



GARY SHAVER (26) 3251 Nebraska St. Louis, MO 63118 Likes tennis. Mr. Wrestling II his favorite. Likes good guys. Girls for pen pals.



MAYES MASSEY (9) 3816 Cindy Drive Douglasville, GA 30135 Enjoys football. Andre the Giant his favorite. Likes bad guys. Anyone for pen pals.



DONALD ROGERS (11) 1105 27 St. #14 Galveston, TX 77550 Likes football. Paul Jones his favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



JANICE JORDAN (20) 3695 Kennedy Blvd. Jersey City, NJ 07307 Likes to draw. Bruno Sammartino her favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



DARRIN KARUZAS (11) 3750 N.W. 115 Ave. Coral Springs, FL 33065 Enjoys sports. Steve Keirn his favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



LINDA POWLES (18) Rt. 3 Box 693 Salisbury, NC 28144 Likes music. Mighty Igor her favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



RANDY MCCOLLEY (12)
326 Ravine St.
Faribault, MN 55021
Enjoys hockey. Billy
Francis his favorite.
Likes good guys.
Girls for pen pals.



MARK YOUNG (11) 25 Willow Drive Monessen, PA 15062 Likes baseball. Billy "Red" Lyons his favorite. Likes good guys. Anyone for pen pals.



DEAN BAILEY (15)
221 Diamond Avenue
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
Collects magazines. Mil
Mascaras his favorite.
Likes good guys.
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CURTIS TILLEY (9)
Route 1 Box 118B
Summerfield, NC 27358
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Rhodes his favorite. Likes
good guys. Boys for PP's.

## SUPERSTAR GRAHAM WILL KEEP BRUNO OUT OF WRESTLING

R ULES HAVE A way of backfiring on the very people they are designed to protect. Obscure rules especially.

The WWWF is beginning to discover this sad fact of life now. And all because a simple, obscure, rarely-enforced rule has been put into motion by WWWF champion Superstar Billy Graham. For a man who usually takes pride in breaking the rules, his present actions seem most out of character. He has demanded that one single paragraph of one rule be enforced to the letter. He has threatened legal action if it isn't.

When Bruno Sammartino first won the belt from Buddy Rogers,

(Continued on page 62)

# WRESTLING... FOREVER!



Bruno Sammartino and Superstar Graham lock in a brutal test of strength during one of their titanic struggles. If Graham has his way, Bruno will never wrestle him again.

Blackmail is an ugly business, but perfectly suited to Superstar Billy Graham. Here is the story of how Graham is forcing promoters to blacklist Bruno Sammartino, one of the most despicable actions ever taken by a professional athlete!

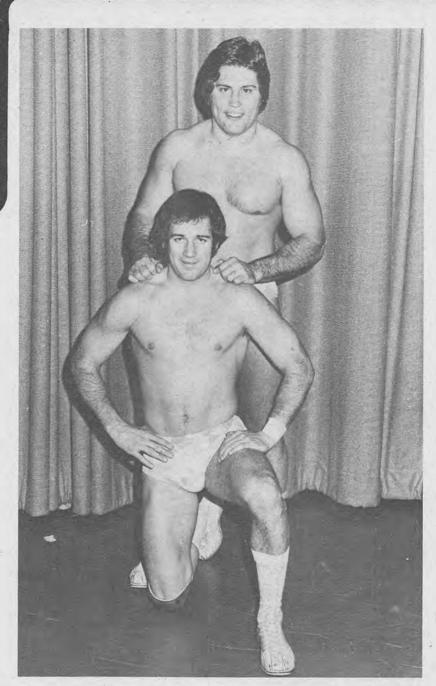
### INSIDE WPESTLING

#### JIM BRUNZELL

Capsule Profile



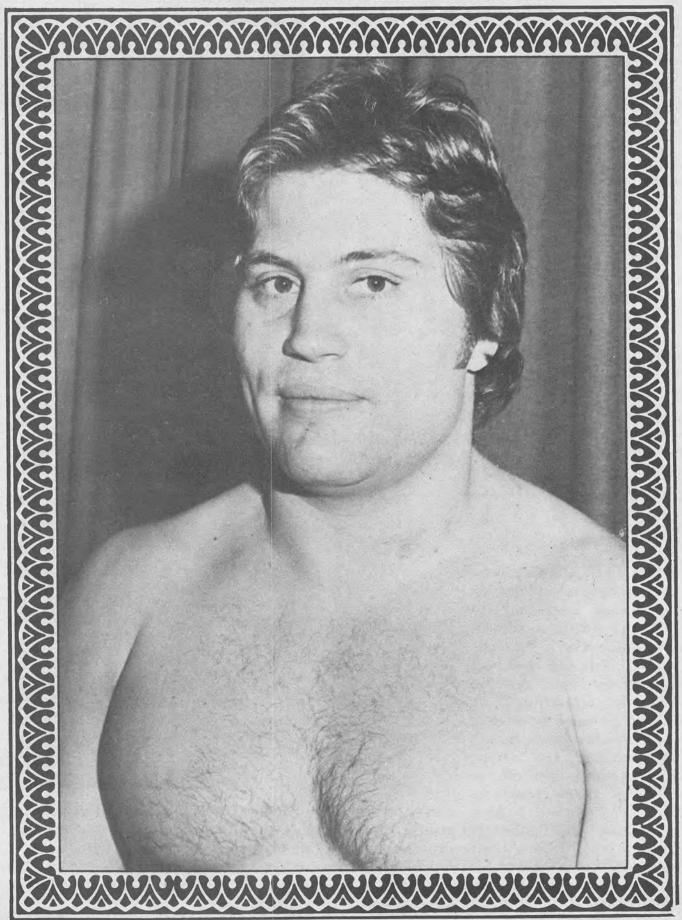
THE FUTURE OF wrestling depends a lot upon this young man and his uncanny ability to devise new maneuvers . . . To many people, he is the man who epitomizes the best in scientific wrestling . . . Though he has only been in the sport a few years, he and his partner, Greg Gagne, have already captured the AWA tag team championship ("We worked a long time to win that title. But let me tell you, it has been worth it!") . . . One of his greatest assets is his enthusiasm for the sport ("I love wrestling. There is a beauty to the sport which



can't be found anywhere else.")... In his few years as a professional wrestler, he has introduced many innovative new holds and maneuvers to competition... He is adept at handling both scientific and rulebreaking wrestlers

("I have learned enough to know how to defeat any type of wrestler. Otherwise, I wouldn't be in the sport.")...
This young man is the future of the sport. Jim Brunzell will be a superstar of the highest calibre!

#### **CAPSULE PROFILE PINUP**



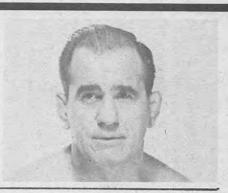
JIM BRUNZELL

# WHERE MOW? ARE THEY MOW?

Each day, out of the thousands of letters we receive, hundreds of them are from fans asking the whereabouts of their favorite wrestier. In this special column, we will try to answer the questions you ask the most!

#### **LOU THESZ**

Former six-time NWA champion Lou Thesz continues to work out every day. Now in his fifth decade of wrestling activity, Lou still takes matches on occasion. "Say I'm semi-retired," Lou recently told us. By the way, Lou Thesz's most recent greatest match occurred just a few months ago, when he wrestled Mil Mascaras in front of nearly 50,000 fans in Mexico City.





#### **ART THOMAS**

The big Sailor from Wisconsin is currently active in the WWA area of the Midwest. Fans in New York, Boston, and other Eastern cities remember when Sailor Art and Bobo Brazil formed an unbeatable tag team combination back in the early 1960s.

#### **DEAN HO**

The popular muscleman from Hawaii is still embroiled in a feud with Alexis Smirnoff in San Francisco. However, Dean's plans for the future are still up in the air. "I'd like to return to Seattle and Portland, a great area with some great fans."





#### **PAT PATTERSON**

After tearing up much of the competition in Florida, Pat Patterson is negotiating with promoters in the AWA territory. "I'd like to travel there," says Pat, "because I've got some scores to settle with some gentlemen currently wrestling in that area."

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#### SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from Page 18)



Above: Ken Patera tries to torture Chief Jay Strongbow during a recent battle. Many people have not forgotten that Patera is responsible for White Wolf being permanently crippled. Below: Mil Mascaras is preparing for a shot at Superstar Graham's WWWF



greatest wrestler in the world. Your American wrestlers are crybabies who seem to be afraid to hurt each other. The Sheik is used to wrestling for survival. To my mind, that is what the sport is all about.

MUHAMMAD-ABDUL KASPAR New York, N.Y.

#### HIS OWN FAULT?

After reading "Hotseat" in the January 1978 issue, I felt I just had to write this letter.

Before the interview with Ken, Editor-in-Chief Peter King said Ken Patera is responsible for Billy White Wolf becoming a hopeless cripple. Actually, I think it is Billy White Wolf's fault-he should never have wrestled a great man like Patera. Face it, Ken outclasses White Wolf 200 to 1. Ken Patera is a great man.

> JIM SEIFERT Rockville Centre, N.Y.

#### **DIFFERENT GRAHAM**

Your article, "Revealed: Mil Mascaras' Plan to Win the Title" (January 1978), was most interesting. I think both Mil and Superstar are great wrestlers, but I doubt Mascaras will win the belt.

I know it's true they drew the last time they wrestled, but that was in 1970. That was the Graham of old. Now he is a

different wrestler. It is true Graham won the title by being cruel, but as it has been noted, it wasn't an accident.

> JOEY FRANGO White Plains, N.Y.

#### HOPE FOR THE BEST

I am writing about the article, "Rick Steamboat-Close to the Title . . . But Closer to Doom" (January 1978).

I feel that if Rick thinks he can handle what he is doing, then he should be the only one to make the decision on whether or not he is advancing too fast in the



Rick Steamboat is impressing people all through the wrestling community. But is he headed for greater glory or doom?

sport. I am Steamboat's Number One fan, and I do not want anything bad to happen to him, because I really care.

Personally, I think Rick can handle any wrestler he takes on. He has what it takes to win. Your magazine is not helping him, however, by doubting his ability. I think he needs encouragement.

Keep up the good work, Rick. CAROL A. COPE Orangeburg, S.C.

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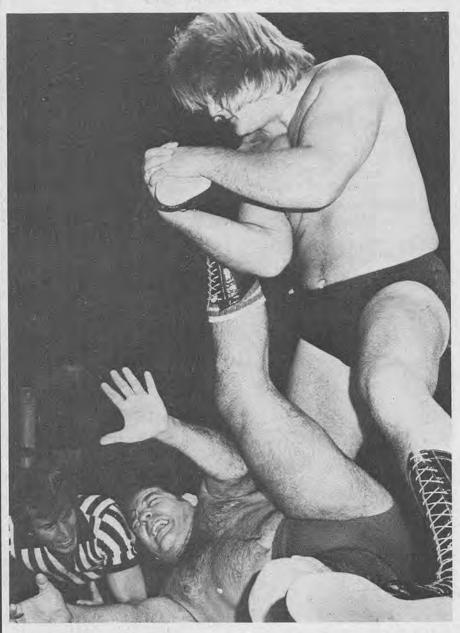
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#### Paul Jones' Shocking Claim

(Continued from Page 21)



"The match tonight proves what I'm saying. I know that Valentine tried to cripple me. Look at the black and blue marks forming on my legs. He wanted to break those bones. I escaped his clutches. His best holds couldn't beat me. I have learned how to counter them all.

"I would be less-than-honest tonight when I thought I would thought for sure I was a goner. match ended in a draw just

Valentine's onslaught continues. But, as Jones later said, "His best holds couldn't beat me."

I came back. He couldn't keep me on the canvas.

"I really worked every single minute of that match. For one hour I sustained the most if I didn't admit there were times vicious maneuvers imaginable. I survived. I took all that lose. When he executed the punishment. And I did some flying atomic skullcrusher, I punishing of my own. That this But you all saw what happened. goes to prove my point. Greg



Even Valentine's deadly atomic skullcrusher couldn't stop Paul Jones. No wonder Paul says Greg will make him champion!

Valentine will make me champion. Thank you and good night."

With that, Paul indicated the press conference was over. He had given his statement. He had made clear exactly what he felt.

Among the reporters, there was a bit of skepticism. They were not sure how to react to Jones' shocking statement. Some were willing to accept it as it stood. Others-the more cynical members of the press corps-were not completely convinced. They could understand the logic behind Paul's claims. They just were not sure if Jones really was ready to take on Harley Race because of his experience with Greg Valentine.

At such time when Jones and Valentine end their longstanding feud. Paul may be able to test his statement. He should soon be due for a title shot (if the feud is over). If Valentine has really helped Jones get better, we will all find out on that fateful night.

The thought is exciting. Has one rulebreaker helped a scientific wrestler prepare to take the NWA title from another rulebreaker? Who knows? It could just be true.

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#### BEHIND THE DOOR

(Continued from Page 8)



This was the condition of Captain Louis Albano (above) after his match against Bruno's manager, Arnold Skoaland (below).



outside the dressing room door. It seems Albano had hired four big goons to "take care" of Skoaland. There was no way Albano wanted any part of Skoaland inside a wrestling ring. These four thugs had overpowered security guards with ease, and had then made their way towards Arnold's dressing room. In the room was a closed circuit television, with a view of the hallway. We saw Albano's hired hands moving down the

hall towards the fate that awaited them-Wayne and

'Don't worry about a thing, Arnold," I said. "An army couldn't get past that door. Sit back and enjoy the fun!"

It was over in a flash. Butch picked up one of the punks, and threw him down the hall as if he were a paper airplane. Wayne then leveled another thug with a mere tap on the chin. The remaining two hoodlums went running away, in search of the Captain to tell him the bad news. Albano's night also ended the same way-with him running back to the dressing room. As he did, Skoaland, myself, and close to 30,000 fans laughed derisively at him.

At my place three nights later, I threw the biggest party wrestling has ever seen. I invited every big name in wrestling. That includes Superstar Billy Graham, Ivan Koloff, Ken Patera, Dan Shocket and dozens of heels. As expected, none of them showed up. Only the scientific wrestlers came, which tells you how great a party it was!

Have you noticed what

wrestler has been missing from the WWWF area in the past few months? George "The Animal" Steele.

It seems somebody lined Steele's street clothes with a special industrial glue recently, the same stuff that was once used on the Golden Terror's mask. Word has it that when Steele took his clothes off before going to bed that night, half his hairy body, along with strips of skin, went with his clothes. It'll be a while before he recovers. Wow! I wondered who played such a vicious and downright nasty trick on him?

The once-notorious Dick Slater, who has been wrestling scientifically since I exerted some influence on him around six months ago, is constantly being harassed by my old enemy, Stan Hansen. Hansen, who has been threatening to break Slater's neck with the lariat for several months now,



Stan Hansen has brought his deadly lariat to Georgia and plans to break Dick Slater's neck with it. Dick says he can handle Hansen and successfully avoid the lariat. has been terrorizing the NWA with his rulebreaking tactics.

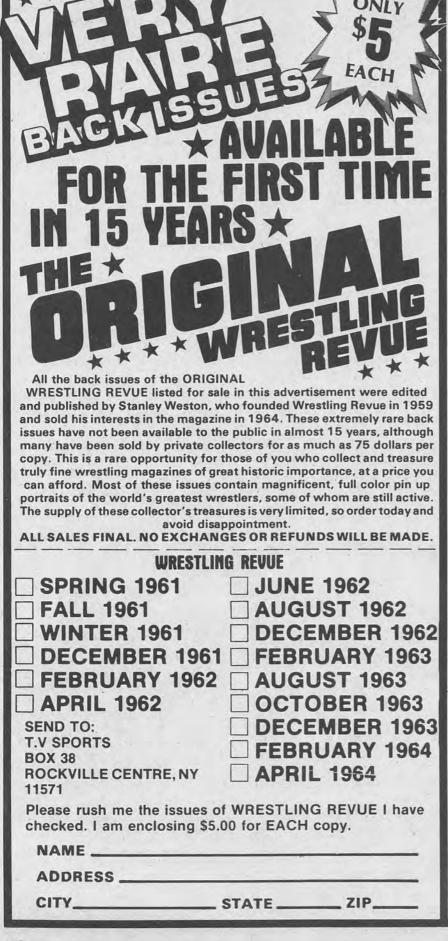
Recently, Slater and I watched movies of Hansen and his lariat. Slater came away with the feeling that he owned Stan.

"There is nothing about the man's wrestling style that I do not know," said Slater. "I owe any and all of my future successes against Hansen to you." Believe me, the pleasure is all mine.

During the next two months, I plan to strike at rulebreakers in each of the three major wrestling alliances. My main targets will be: NWA—Ric Flair, Sheik, Lars Anderson and Jim Valiant; AWA—Lord Al Hays, Super Destroyer, Angelo Mosca, Bobby Heenan and Blackjack Lanza; WWWF—Ken Patera, Lou Albano (as always), and Professor Toru Tanaka.

Each of them has already felt my wrath. I shall never let up.





# RANDO

(Continued from Page 15)

kid look terrible! I totally demolish that no-talented punk. The only time he looks good is in the prelims, where he belongs!" . . . GREG GAGNE and JIM BRUNZELL have successfully defended their AWA tag team belts 21 times . . WAHOO McDANIEL is back in action after being sidelined due to a broken leg [the leg was broken by GREG



WAHOO McDANIEL

VALENTINE]. Wahoo vows to repay Greg in double for what he did. "I'll break both his damn legs!"

snarls McDaniel.

JOSE LOTHARIO is offering THE SHEIK \$5,000 to get into the ring with him. Jose claims he has learned to throw fire and will now be able to match Sheik every way possible . . . BRUISER refuses to give IVAN KOLOFF a "normal" rematch for the WWA title. "I want some kind of match where one of us will leave the ring and be forced to retire for life!"

says Bruiser . . . VERNE GAGNE and CRUSHER are a new-and unbeatable-tag team combination.

Fans in the northwest are up in arms about the illegal tactics used by Pacific tag team champions BUDDY ROSE and ED WISKOWSKI . . DUTCH SAVAGE admits LORD JONATHAN BOYD is one of the toughest stars in the sport today. "I may disagree with a lot of things he does," Savage said, "but you have to give credit where credit is due." . . . STEVE KEIRN and MIKE



**DUTCH SAVAGE** 

GRAHAM have been unsuccessful in their attempts to take the Florida state belts from MR. SAITO and IVAN KOLOFF.

KEN PATERA teamed with SUPERSTAR GRAHAM a few weeks ago, and they made a great combo. But Ken does not want to team with Graham again. "I want to wrestle him!" Ken growls. "I can become champion if the promoters will only give me the opportunity to wrestle for the belt." . . . The NWA has ordered PAK SONG and manager ROCK HUNTER to pay a \$10,000 fine for sneak-attacking MR. WRESTLING II several months ago, forcing the man to be hospitalized . . . Fans of the "Golden Greek," JOHN TOLOS, will be glad to hear that he is wrestling regularly in Hawaii and hopes to tour the U.S. within the year.

That's all the news for now. See you next month.



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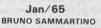
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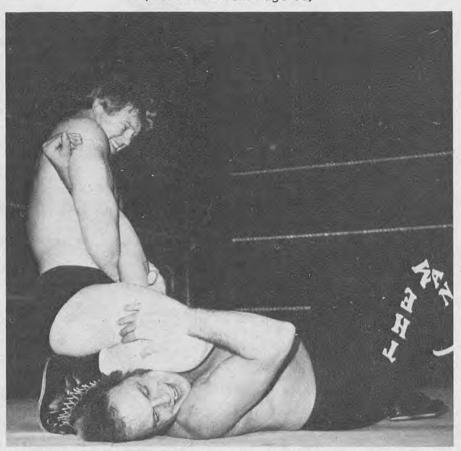
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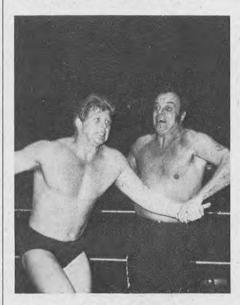
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#### "BEAT STAN STASIAK!"

(Continued from Page 33)



An armbar by Backlund secures his advantage as Stasiak contemplates an escape (above). He breaks free and whips Bob across the ring (below). In a few moments, Bob will reverse the situation and emerge victorious.



It should be noted at this time that there have been many rumors circulating about the origin of these tests. The most frequently repeated story says that Superstar Billy Graham forced the promoters to make Backlund go through this

ritual. It is said he is scared to wrestle Bob for the belt; that he is terrified the young man will be able to take the title away. Therefore, he has placed a great deal of pressure on the promoters, threatening to not wrestle at all unless Backlund goes through with these tests.

Few people are doubting these rumors are true.

Nevertheless, the first test on the list was certainly not an easy one. Wrestling Stan Stasiak is never easy. Just ask the many men he has crippled over the years.

To say, that Stan Stasiak is ruthless, cunning, and vicious is tounderstate the situation. But everybody knows this.

The list said, "Test 1: 'Beat Stan Stasiak!" So that is what Bob Backlund set out to do.

Many scientific wrestlers have tried to defeat Stan Stasiak. Few have. And certainly not with scientific methods. Stasiak has a way of eating into a man's soul, driving him to do things he wouldn't normally do. Many men have found themselves brawling against Stasiak. Some win. Most lose.

Even Bob Backlund, it was thought, would have to resort to brawling. But Bob fooled everyone.

From the opening bell, it was Backlund who set the tone of the match. He would allow no dirty tricks from Stasiak. He kept the action very fast—too fast for Stan. He was all over the ring, jumping from one corner to the other, confusing his vicious opponent.

The one thing everyone who saw that match remembered most is Bob's remarkable speed. Without a doubt, it is Bob's most visible skill. He is too fast for his opponents. They simply cannot keep up with him. Bob makes them all look like tired old men. That may be the secret to his success.

To state it as simply as possible, Bob Backlund overwhelmed Stan Stasiak. The ruthless veteran could not keep up with the quick and clever young star. The match wasn't so very long. Yet it was a bit sad to see a man like Stan Stasiak undone.

Having passed his first test, Bob is looking forward to his second test. No one is quite sure what it is. Will he have to defeat another ruthless competitor? Will he have to face one of the top scientific wrestlers in the WWWF? (There have been a few stories circulating that Backlund may have to wrestle Bruno Sammartino. No one has given those stories much credence.)

One thing is for sure, however. Bob Backlund is well on his way to the championship of the WWWF. If he can convince the promoters he is worthy, he will be given the title shot he craves. And when that happens, he may not be very far from owning the belt!



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#### ON THE ROAD

(Continued from Page 10)

obviously been thinking about this for some time.

"I don't know if I could function as a rulebreaker. After all, I do respect the laws governing wrestling. All my life I've been taught to obey rules. To do the opposite would be very difficult.

"But I have yet to meet a man in this sport who isn't in it for the money. Oh yeah, I've heard lofty talk about ambitious goals. It's horse manure, if you know what I mean. Every man is in it for the money. with the other. I couldn't make the connection in my own mind. But Rick seemed to have rationalized things for himself. And if it made him happy, who was I to criticize?

Earlier in this column I said I had learned a lot about Rick Steamboat by the time the pecan pie was served. That is true. I had learned that he is a young man to watch. His career could go any which way. It all depends on what he decides.

Maybe the fans can do something. I don't know. If they let

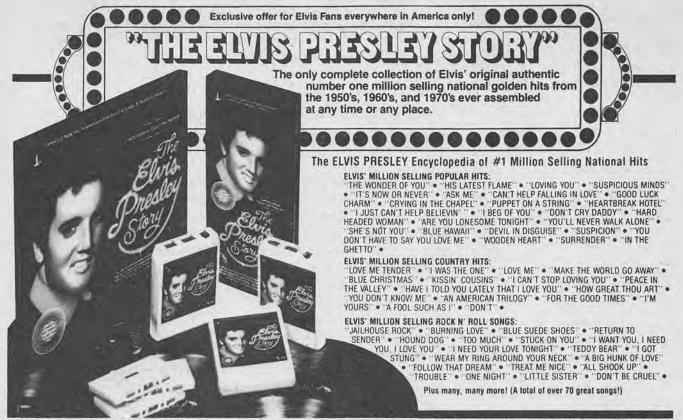


Rick has Blackjack Mulligan in trouble. Three seconds later, Steamboat will win the battle. Rick is an excellent scientific wrestler, but lately he has become tempted to become a rulebreaker.

"Quite simply, this is why I don't allow myself to become loud and boisterous. I'm not going to boast that I'm the best man in the sport. I think I'm very good. There are a few men who are better. But what should happen if I become a rulebreaker. My boasting would come back to haunt me. I know it would. I just like to do my job and go home. I don't have to do any more than that."

To say the least, I was confused. One thing really had nothing to do Rick know how they feel—one way or the other—maybe he can make a decision then. He can be reached in care of this magazine (write to: "STEAMBOAT'S CHOICE", c/o INSIDE WRESTLING, P.O. Box 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571).

In my opinion, Rick is actually considering becoming a rulebreaker. If the fans wish him to remain as he is, they should make their feelings known. I just thought I'd let everyone have the chance to help this confused young man.



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#### **BODYSLAMS & PINFALLS**

(Continued from Page-12)

was slightly stupider than a potato. A good wrestler has to be cunning."

"You can say that again!" Gary Hart interjected. "I've wasted more time on dummies. Now, before I take on a wrestler, I give him a written exam. First, he's got to know how to spell his name. That eliminates a lot of wrestlers. Then I ask general questions, like who's the President of the United States. That knocks out a lot more. Those left can be made into champions."

Again, the laughter was general and long. After all, these men are brilliant. It must



Who can doubt that managers like J.J. Dillon (above) and Lou Albano (below) are the geniuses of our age?



frustrate them to work with men of an average or even above average mentality.

"Well, at least there's one good thing," Bobby Heenan added, "no wrestler is as stupid as a referee. No one can doubt these are the stupidest creatures on earth. Anyone can get around these morons. They're not worth buying; it's too easy to fool them!"

There was general agreement there. Referees are ignorant clods, boorish pretenders to keeping order. All managers ignore them like campers learn to ignore flies.

The evening was becoming morning when Albano asked everyone for quiet.

"Gentlemen," he announced, "I'd like to make a toast. We wouldn't be here if it weren't for professional wrestling. It has made us wealthy. It has given us the opportunity to see the world, to live like few men can. When the rest of them slowly die at their boring jobs, we can enjoy continued excitement. But most of all, it has given us the chance to use our minds in the best way possible, creating and perfecting wrestling strategies and maneuvers. No one but another manager could understand the holy feeling one gets when his wrestler executes a complicated maneuver perfectly. Gentlemen, raise your glasses to professional wrestling!"

As one, the glasses raised into the air. The first rays of sunlight sparkled on them. The moment was too sublime to be broken by sound. Silently, the men drained their glasses and headed back to their rooms.

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#### **DUSTY RHODES**

(Continued from Page 37)

circulating says Dusty is seeing a psychiatrist to help him overcome his mental block against becoming champion. The storys says it will take at least five years before Dusty is cured.

This rumor is spread by fans who don't know any better. Occasionally, a jealous professional wrestler will relate the story, but he'll only be ridiculed for his trouble. Wrestling is a very complex sport which depends a good deal on luck, much more so than most professionals like to admit. Chance tells us sooner or

Dusty uses a piledriver to send Buddy Wolff crashing to the mat. This was one of Rhodes' greatest victories. later Dusty will get the lucky break and become champion. To say his failure so far has to do with some emotional problem just doesn't make sense.

However, there used to be a kernel of truth to this rumor. In the beginning of last year, Dusty went into a depression over his failure to win the NWA title. This didn't help any, as Rhodes soon realized. Like a duck shaking water off its feathers, Dusty shook off his disappointment and looked toward the future. Every professional wrestler has his setbacks. Dusty overcame his.

The third lie is even more preposterous. People claim Dusty



has deserted his Florida fans to pursue the WWWF belt. Let's allow Dusty to refute this one himself.

"I wish I could get my hands on the rat who thought that one up!" Dusty vows. "I'd rearrange his face



Although there are many lies circulating about Dusty, he couldn't care less. "My people know what not to believe about the dream," he says with confidence.

so bad St. Francis would turn away in disgust. I'd cut off my arm before leaving my Florida followers. Every good thing that's ever happened to me started with these wonderful people.

"A man doesn't leave behind people like that. When I started there, my reputation as a rulebreaker was as bad as anyone's in the business. I asked the Florida fans to accept my change on faith. There were no guarantees I wasn't lying, ready to betray them at any time. Only their decency and trust kept me from being booed at every appearance. Every time I walk into an arena, I thank my lucky stars for the Florida fans. A man would have to be mad to betray them."

Is Dusty worried about the rumors?

"My fans know me," he is assured, "and no lies can come between us."

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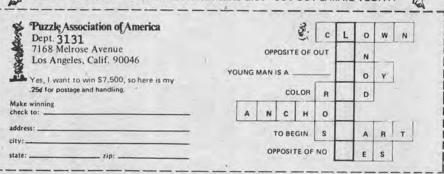
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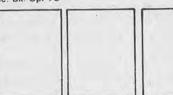
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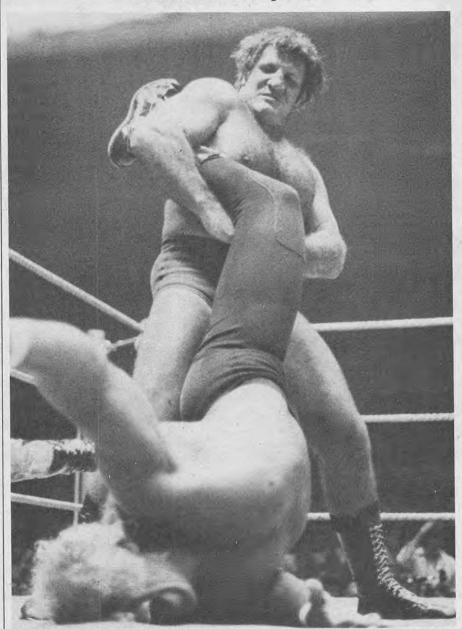
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#### SUPERSTAR GRAHAM

(Continued from Page 40)



A determined Sammartino is only inches away from regaining the WWWF belt during Graham's last match against Bruno. Obviously, Graham fears the power, strength, and wrestling ability of the great "Living Legend."

no rematch was given to Rogers. When Ivan Koloff beat Sammartino for the championship, Bruno was not given a rematch. After Pedro Morales won the title, Ivan Koloff left for a different territory without ever trying to win back the belt. After Stan Stasiak wrested the title from Pedro, the two men did not wrestle again. Bruno did not wrestle Stasiak again until three years after their title match.

Since losing the belt to Graham, Bruno has tried to win back his title on five separate occasions. According to the rules, he is barred from wrestling Graham again.

Quite simply, in the WWWF, a champion who loses the belt is not afforded much opportunity to win it back. In Article V, Section D, Paragraph 4 of the rulebook there is this statement: "An exchampion (that being the man who most recently lost the title) shall be allowed five or less opportunities to regain the championship. After five attempts, he must wait for a period of not less than five years before he can be allowed to wrestle again for the championship."

What this means is clear-Bruno cannot wrestle Graham for the title again. At least not for another five years!

When this was pointed out to the promoters by Billy Graham, their initial reaction was simply to waive the rule. It is their right.



A blood-soaked Superstar Graham is armwhipped into a turnbuckle by an enraged Sammartino.

But Superstar Graham insisted it be enforced.

"Why should an exception be made for that meatloaf?" asked Graham. "Why should he be treated any differently than any other man in the sport? He is no more special than any other wrestler."

By right, Superstar Graham is absolutely correct. There is no reason why Bruno Sammartino should be given another chance to wrestle for the WWWf title. At least no reason which can be found in any rulebook. However, there are other considerations which have to be made.

(Continued on page 64)



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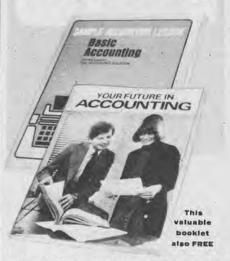
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#### SUPERSTAR GRAHAM

(Continued from Page 63)



Above: A stunned Bruno Sammartino realizes he may never get another title match. Below: Bruno has Graham groveling on the mat.

For many years, Bruno Sammartino served as WWWF champion. He ruled with pride and dignity. He brought honor to the title. He became a living legend. In many ways, the WWWF owes its continued existence to Bruno Sammartino. He is the exception to any rule.

Many promoters feel it is morally right to give Bruno as many chances as he wants to regain the title. They do not care about the precedent which was set in the past. They appreciate what Sammartino did for the association, and they want to repay him in this manner.

Other promoters feel that a rule is a rule. They would like to waive it for Bruno, but they know they can't. They are sure Superstar Graham will do everything within his power to make the association enforce the rule. Graham has promised



to take the WWWF to court if it does not comply with his wishes. Legally, he has a strong case.

Bruno himself has remained strangely guiet on this matter. It is said he prefers to let the promoters settle this problem. He will comply with whatever they decide.

But there is no resolution in the near future. The promoters are split on the subject-some want to arrange more rematches, others feel they cannot do so in good conscience. So far, the second group has prevailed. The promoters have thus far avoided a lawsuit.

Yet there is pressure on the promoters to reverse their course of action. Fans want to see more rematches. They want to see Bruno win his title back from Superstar Graham, They do not like the idea of having Billy as champion. They all see Bruno as the last great hope for dignity in the WWWF.

Graham insists he will go to court to prove his point. "So long as I'm champion," says Graham, "Bruno will not be given another rematch. In five years he will be too old to wrestle, so I have no fear at all. That Italian sausage can tilt the windmills all he wants. He ain't getting a chance to take my title ever again!"

That may be true, and it may not. The promoters favoring Bruno may be able to find a loophole in the rules which will allow them to suspend this clause. The legalities may be tricky, but they may be able to do it. It all depends on the lawyers now.

Article V, Section D, Paragraph 4. One simple statement written long ago to protect the interests of the WWWF. This simple statement has touched off a controversy which may take years to resolve. And by then, it may be too late.



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